

DAILY TRACKER

NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. Bill Gates has extended his support to an experimental nuclear power project in a small town near a coal-fired power plant in Wyoming, the country's top coal-mining state.
Source: <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/bill-gates-venture-to-build-sodium-nuclear-plant-in-wyoming>
2. Chancellor Angela Merkel defended her decision to phase out nuclear energy, despite the fact that it has made it more difficult for Germany to transition away from fossil fuels.
Source: <https://www.fxempire.com/news/article/exclusive-merkel-defends-nuclear-power-exit-despite-climate-challenges-811597>
3. According to the UN nuclear watchdog, Iran has expanded its stockpile of highly enriched uranium and is refusing to allow inspectors access to a nuclear plant where it has apparently begun manufacturing of advanced centrifuges.
Source: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/11/iran-increases-enriched-uranium-prevents-inspector-access-says-iaea#ixzz7CYIQq29Z>
4. As per the official IRNA news agency, Iran has urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to avoid making "hasty or politically motivated" comments on the country's nuclear programme.
Source: <https://english.lokmat.com/international/iran-urges-iaea-to-avoid-hasty-politically-motivated-comments-on-nuke-program/>
5. The latest venture at Culham, the hub of UK fusion research for decades, is a demonstration plant for General Fusion (GF), a company based in Burnaby, Canada. It is scheduled to start operating in 2025, and have reactors for sale in the early 2030s. This could be an essential technology to meet demand for clean energy in the twenty-first century and beyond.
Source: <https://www.nature.com/immersive/d41586-021-03401-w/index.html>
6. The experts from IAEA are to meet with Japanese officials and visit the Fukushima Daiichi plant to discuss technical details of the planned release of treated radioactive water into the ocean, Japanese officials said.
Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/u-n-nuclear-agency-team-to-review-plans-for-release-of-fukushima-water/article37498602.ece>
7. Engineers from Lancaster University in the United Kingdom and the Joef Stefan Institute in Slovenia have successfully transmitted digital information over long distances using nuclear radiation rather than the electromagnetic signals commonly used in wireless communication systems such as smartphones.
Source: <https://www.newsweek.com/digital-data-transmit-nuclear-radiation-instead-electromagnetic-signals-1649745>



MISSILES/ BIO WEAPONS

1. The UAE's Ministry of Defense tweeted on Tuesday that it intends to purchase the M-SAM missile. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has announced plans to buy mid-range surface-to-air missiles developed in South Korea in a deal worth up to US\$3.5 billion.
Source: <https://www.siasat.com/uae-to-purchase-s-korean-m-sam-missiles-in-3-5bn-deal-2226603/>
2. The situation became tense at the Polish-Belarusian border. The Belarusian premier Alexander Lukashenko announced on November 13 that his country is ready to deploy several Iskander short-range ballistic missile systems from Russia.
Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/eu-concerned-over-worsening-situation-at-poland-belarus-border-lukashenko-wants-iskander-missiles-deployed/>
3. Russia's weapons test has heightened concerns about the increasing weaponization of space. Moscow used rockets to destroy the Tselina D satellite, which had been in orbit since 1982. Russia has been accused of putting the International Space Station (ISS) in jeopardy as a result of the debris. NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg called it "reckless," and the US warned a "response."
Source: <https://m.ap7am.com/lv-356322-after-russia-destroys-satellite-with-missile-usa-says-will-respond>
4. On Tuesday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov dismissed US accusations that Moscow blew up one of its own satellites with a missile strike that created a debris cloud threatening the International Space Station.
Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/us-russia-relations-russia-dismisses-us-accusations-of-satellite-missile-strike-2613069>
5. In Iran senior military and state officials attended a ceremony in the capital Tehran to honor Hassan Tehrani Moqaddam, an IRGC commander. He was a key figure in Iran's ballistic missile program and his unique role in the missile program of the country.
Source: <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2021/11/17/670824/Iran-commemorates-father-of-Iran%E2%80%99s-missile-program,-martyr-Tehrani-Moqaddam>
6. According to a senior Pentagon official, the US has raised "alarm" over Russia's transfer of S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems to India, but it is uncertain on how to handle the transaction.
Source: <https://www.eastmojo.com/world/2021/11/17/us-concerned-over-delivery-of-russias-s-400-missile-system-to-india/>
7. The U.S. Army purchased from Israel is on a two-month deployment to Guam. The Army officials said Wednesday they expect to obtain data that will help it understand how effectively the Iron Dome Missile Defense System can be used in the U.S. territory and how well the system integrates with missile defense technology it already uses, the Pacific Daily News reported.
Source: <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/hawaii/articles/2021-11-17/us-army-deploys-iron-dome-missile-defense-system-to-guam>



8. The raise in territorial tensions between Japan and South Korea led to the cancellation of a three-way news conference with the United States on Wednesday. This dealt a setback to Washington's hopes of presenting a unified front to the challenge of a nuclear-armed North Korea.
Source: <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2021/11/27354f6c77db-urgent-us-japan-s-korea-to-continue-talks-over-end-of-korean-war-issue.html>
9. The South Korean foreign ministry voiced concern over the "numerous pieces of debris" created in low Earth orbit when Russia destroyed a Soviet-era satellite with a missile attack earlier this week, but didn't condemn Russia. China has yet to publish an official statement on the issue.
Source: <https://spacenews.com/china-silent-south-korea-concerned-over-debris-created-by-russias-anti-satellite-missile-test/>
10. A team of scientists from China, the US, Belgium and Australia have made a startling discovery of 18 new zoonotic viruses in the wet markets across China. These viruses may pose considerable risk to humans and domesticated animals.
Source: <https://www.cnbc.tv/18.com/science/study-finds-18-new-zoonotic-viruses-in-chinas-wet-markets-warns-of-high-risk-to-humans-11497972.htm>
11. The Russian Ministry of Defense launched an anti-satellite (ASAT) missile on Monday, November 15. While nations including Russia have conducted ASAT tests before, this test was something different. The Russian anti-satellite missile test was the first of its kind.
Source: <https://www.space.com/russia-anti-satellite-missile-test-first-of-its-kind>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) told member nations in its confidential quarterly report Wednesday that Iran has an estimated stock of 17.7 kilograms (39 pounds) of uranium enriched to up to 60% fissile purity, an increase of almost 8 kilograms since August. This increased stockpile of highly enriched uranium is a breach of a 2015 accord with world powers.
Source: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/mid-east/iran-further-boosts-stockpile-of-highly-enriched-uranium-iaea>
2. The government newspaper Iran Daily has articulated Tehran's harder new position in five points ahead of the Vienna talks on Iran's 2015 nuclear deal on November 29. Tehran's five demands form a near-maximalist bargaining position that, if upheld, could easily result in a standstill.
Source: <https://www.iranintl.com/en/20211118899102>
3. Over a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi stated that his country "is very serious" about nuclear talks with world powers. In less than two weeks, multilateral discussions in Vienna aimed at restoring the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran will resume.
Source: <https://www.iranintl.com/en/20211116813565>

4. Gen. John Hyten (USAF), Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke with CBS News about the China's summer test of a new hypersonic weapon. Hyten revealed that China launched a long-range missile that circled the world, dropped a hypersonic vehicle that glided back to China and "impacted a target." He told CBS that the missile may not have struck the target, but it was "close enough."
Source: <https://www.foxnews.com/world/china-hypersonic-weapons-surprise-nuclear-attack-us>
5. The United States and its Arab allies in the Gulf accused Iran of causing a nuclear crisis and destabilizing the Middle East with ballistic missiles and drones. The warning was given in a joint statement following a meeting in Saudi Arabia of the US and Gulf Cooperation Council working group on Iran.
Source: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/909645-iran-urged-to-prevent-conflict-and-nuclear-crisis>
6. As China's nuclear arsenal have swiftly expanded, with more warheads and even more weapons to carry them, prompting the United States to urge for arms limitation talks with Xi Jinping.
Source: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-pushes-arms-control-talks-as-chinas-nuclear-arsenal-grows-11637231400>
7. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was signed into law by US President Joe Biden yesterday. The USD1.2 trillion package is a key part of President Build Back Better agenda, and it includes more than USD62 billion for the US Department of Energy (DOE) to deliver a "more equitable clean energy future," which includes preventing the premature retirement of existing nuclear plants and investing in advanced nuclear projects.
Source: <https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Nuclear-supporting-infrastructure-bill-becomes-US>
8. The British branch of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs recently commissioned a survey of British public opinion in relation to NATO's nuclear policy. 70 percent of respondents wished NATO to refrain from using nuclear weapons in any ensuing military operations, and 65 percent wished NATO to rely exclusively on non-nuclear weapons in the possibility of Russia invading one or more of the Baltic states.
Source: <https://thebulletin.org/2021/11/the-british-public-wants-nato-to-renounce-the-first-use-of-nuclear-weapons/>
9. Axios reported on Wednesday, that the United States and Israel are discussing the idea of having a temporary nuclear deal with Iran that will extend the time for negotiations to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).
Source: <https://english.lokmat.com/international/us-israel-mulling-short-term-nuclear-deal-with-iran-to-extend-time-for-talks-reports/>
10. Robert Malley, the US special envoy for Iran, is consulting with regional allies to discuss the possibility of re-entering the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action — the 2015 nuclear agreement on which he was a main negotiator and architect — with both Iran and the US.
Source: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1969341>



UN REFORMS

1. An Iranian official said on Wednesday that UN nuclear inspector chief Rafael Grossi will visit Iran next week, as Tehran and international powers prepare to resume discussions on resurrecting a 2015 nuclear deal.
Source: <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-11-17/IAEA-chief-Grossi-to-visit-Iran-on-Monday-15gAUW3MhhK/index.html>
2. On Wednesday, US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said that the US, South Korea and Japan stand firm in maintaining compliance with UN Security Council sanctions on North Korea for missile launches. They are also ready to push for new ones if Pyongyang doesn't comply.
Source: <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/us/us-s-korea-japan-push-for-compliance-with-dprk-sanctions-for-missile-launches-sherman20211118070250/>
3. Mohammad Reza Ghaebi, head of Iran's mission to the United Nations in Vienna, said the new report newly-published quarterly report of the IAEA about the implementation of Iran's obligations to the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), shows that the IAEA has continued its verification and supervisory activities on Iran's commitments to the JCPOA.
Source: <https://www.siasat.com/iran-urges-iaea-to-avoid-hastypolitically-motivated-comments-on-nuke-program-2227002/>
4. Ambassador T S Tirumurti, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, stated at a UN Security Council open briefing on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on Wednesday that the situation in Afghanistan is a source of grave concern. Also, added that terrorism remains a "serious threat" to Afghanistan and the region, with the current situation in the war-torn country having direct repercussions for India.
Source: <https://www.news18.com/news/india/india-at-unsc-says-terrorism-continues-to-pose-serious-threat-to-afghanistan-and-region-4457576.html>
5. At the United Nations Security Council, India stated that it is eager to engage with "other stakeholders" to expedite the delivery of much-needed assistance to the Afghan people, and urged countries in the area to come together, "rising above partisan interests."
Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/ready-to-deliver-urgent-humanitarian-aid-to-afghans-india-at-un-security-council-2615604>
6. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established an accelerator lab in Riyadh on Wednesday to develop solutions to modern-day difficulties. The accelerator lab was developed, according to Adam Bouloukos, the UNDP's resident representative in Saudi Arabia, because ideas and creativity were needed to respond to the government's changes and new agenda.
Source: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1970251/saudi-arabia>

7. Russian Ambassador to Kabul Dmitry Zhirnov told journalists on Thursday that Russia fully accepts the effectiveness of UN sanctions in dealings with the Taliban. He added the Russian embassy is resolving an entire set of tasks it faces jointly with Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry, at the same time the Russian side is fully cognizant of the UN sanctions in effect against the Taliban movement.

Source: <https://tass.com/politics/1363177>